

Message Text

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73

ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 ARA-16 ISO-00 SPC-03 AID-20 NSC-10 RSC-01

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FM AMEMBASSY NASSAU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4986

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP BF

SUBJ: COMMONWEALTH TARIFF PREFERENCES

1. THE BAHAMAS CASP FOR THE PAST TWO YEARS HAS INCLUDED A GOAL OF PERSUADING THE GCOB TO DROP THE COMMONWEALTH TARIFF PREFERENCES. THE OPPORTUNITY FOR PURSUING THIS GOAL WAS TO COME AFTER UK MEMBERSHIP IN THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES AND BAHAMIAN INDEPENDENCE, AT A TIME WHEN OTHER COMMONWEALTH MEMBERS WERE DECIDING OR HAD DECIDED TO OPT OUT OF THE PREFERENCE REGIME.

2. IN THE COURSE OF PREPARING THE BAHAMAS COMMERCIAL ACTION PROGRAM, IT BECAME CLEAR TO US THAT THE ELEMENTS OF THIS GOAL NEED TO BE REVIEWED BEFORE ACTION IS TAKEN. WE ARE UNDERTAKING AN ANALYSIS OF THE IMPORTANCE (OR LACK OF) TO THE BAHAMAS OF THE COMMONWEALTH TARIFF PREFERENCES SO THAT WE CAN DEMONSTRATE SIGNIFICANCE OF THEIR REMOVAL. WE NEED THE DEPARTMENT'S ASSISTANCE IN ASSEMBLING ARGUMENTS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF ITS REMOVAL TO THE US.

3. IN THIS CONTEXT, WE WOULD APPRECIATE BEING INFORMED OF CURRENT US POLICY AND VIEWS ON THE COMMONWEALTH TARIFF PREFERENCES SYSTEM. WHICH COMMONWEALTH MEMBERS HAVE OR ARE LIKELY TO GET OUT OF IT? ARE US CONCERNS AT THIS TIME PRIMARILY

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THOSE OF PRINCIPLE, OR ARE THERE US PRODUCTS WHICH ARE AT A

PARTICULAR DISADVANTAGE, ESPECIALLY IN TRADE WITH COMMONWEALTH
CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES? ANTICIPATING A PROBABLE BAHAMIAN CON-
CERN THAT WE WILL WANT TO DEAL WITH. WHAT, IF ANY, HAS BEEN
THE UK REACTION TO US POLICY INITIATIVES OPPOSING COMMONWEALTH
PREFERENCES, ALSO AS IT SPECIFICALLY RELATES TO OUR INITIA-
TIVES, IF ANY, IN OTHER CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES?
SPIERS

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